

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RANGOO 00922 201029 Z

43 42

ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EA-13 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SY-02 USSS-00 OPR-01 A-01 IO-03

RSR-01 M-03 L-02 NEA-06 PRS-01 SCA-01 /080 W

----- 122760

R 201003 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6680

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0922

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS BM

SUBJECT: SOVIET DOCTORS ABDUCTED BY REBEL GROUP

1. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT TWO SOVIET DOCTORS SERVING AT SOVIET-BUILT AND PARTIALLY SOVIET- STAFFED HOSPITAL IN TAUNGGYI, CAPITAL OF SHAN STATE, WERE ABDUCTED BY SMALL INSURGENT GROUP ON EVENING OF APRIL 16 WHILE WALKING IN TAUNGGYI. ABDUCTION IS NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE IN RANGOON OFFICIAL AND DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES BUT PRECISE DETAILS REMAIN UNCLEAR AND MANY RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING.

2. WHILE ONE THEORY IS THAT SOVIETS WERE ABDUCTED BY AN INSURGENT BAND TO PROVIDE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO WOUNDED REBELS ( AN ITALIAN PHYSICIAN WORKING FOR WHO WAS REPORTEDLY SEIZED IN 1958 FOR SAME PURPOSE BY REBELS AND WAS LATER FREED), THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOVIET DOCTORS ARE BEING HELD BY REBEL GROUP WHICH DEMANDS RELEASE BY GUB OF U KHUN HSA, FORMER SAWBWA OF LAWKSAWK, A REBEL LEADER IN GUB CUSTODY SINCE 1969.

3. COMMENT: A. IF SOVIETS ARE BEING HELD FOR SUCH A PURPOSE, INVOLVING POLITICAL BLACKMAIL, SITUATION IS DISTURBING BOTH OF ITSELF AND BECAUSE OF BROADER IMPLICATIONS. THE MANY OTHER INSURGENT FORCES OPERATING IN WIDE AREAS OF BURMA MAY BE MOTIVATED TO FOLLOW SUIT AND TO SEIZE FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC, CONSULAR OR  
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PAGE 02 RANGOO 00922 201029 Z

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL IN ATTEMPT ACHIEVE RELEASE  
OF NUMEROUS INSURGENT POLITICAL PRISONERS HELD BY GUB.

B. AS PART OF THEIR DUTIES, MANY FOREIGN PERSONNEL MOVE IN AREAS  
WHICH ARE NOT ENTIRELY FREE FROM INSURGENCIES. IN THE PAST, THEY  
APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN LARGELY IMMUNE TO INSURGENT ATTENTIONS,  
ALTHOUGH THERE WAS RECENT INCIDENT IN WHICH UN PERSONNEL SUFFERED  
INJURY WHEN INSURGENTS FIRED ON BURMA ARMY ESCORTS ( WEEKA  
9, ITEM 4.) IN THEORY, FOREIGN PERSONNEL ARE GRANTED PERMISSION  
TO VISIT ONLY SAFE AREAS BUT EXTENT OF INSURGENCIES IS SUCH  
THAT THERE ARE MANY GRAY ZONES.  
MARTIN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* LIMDIS  
\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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**Draft Date:** 20 APR 1973  
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EUR  
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